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S E C R E T CONAKRY 000480

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/29/2018

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [GV](#)

SUBJECT: OUSMANE CONTE'S BODYGUARDS FIRE INTO CROWD, WOUNDS
THREE YOUTHS

Classified By: A/DCM SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (U) In response to an uneven distribution of electricity, a number of youths staged protests in the seaport town of Kamsar on August 22, which is home to CBG (Guinean Bauxite Company). Apparently, one neighborhood generator had been out of service for some time while generators in other neighborhoods continued to operate as normal. In response, youths from the neighborhood with the non-functional generator erected a road block in order to prevent the transport of fuel to the other generators. They reportedly demanded that CBG repair the broken generator before they would allow fuel to pass. The dispute led to a confrontation between youths from different neighborhoods.

¶2. (U) The president's son, Ousmane Conte, reportedly arrived at the scene in a convoy of three vehicles. According to contacts, Ousmane got out of his vehicle and attempted to "calm the situation." The youths refused his intervention and started throwing rocks at Ousmane's vehicles. His body guards responded immediately by firing guns into the crowd, wounding at least three individuals.

¶3. (U) According to a contact at CBG, local government authorities from Boke went to Kamsar the same day to resolve the situation. The CBG railroad and all major roads into Kamsar were completely blocked for several hours. By August 25, the situation had been resolved. However, the President of the Rural Commune (similar to a city council) resigned his post on August 26 without giving any specific reason.

COMMENT

¶4. (S) Kamsar has experienced similar episodes of civic tension in the past. About three years ago, the former Minister of Territorial Administration, Kiridi Bangoura, was held hostage by angry youths in response to his handling of a conflict resolution mission. Significant amounts of narcotics are believed to be trafficked through Guinea by way of the port and airstrip in Kamsar. Ousmane Conte is thought to be deeply involved in the drug trade, and maintains a residence in Kamsar. END COMMENT.
BROKENSHIRE